A Selection of

England's Carnegie

Libraries

Compiled by David Lambourne between 2005 and 2022

Boston

A public library in Boston was originally planned as part of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Andrew Carnegie donated £560-00 to provide rooms for the purpose in the new imposing Edwardian Municipal Buildings in West Street. The external walls have an unusual ceramic finish. Much of the interior decor, decorative coloured tiles, wide staircases and extensive woodwork have survived. As well as the public library and reading room, the new building included Council offices, the fire station, the police station, court and cells and the School of Art. The Public Libraries' Act was adopted in 1904 and the building was opened in the same year by Alderman Joseph Cooke, who also made a substantial donation of £500-00 towards the project. The building is now used exclusively as offices and the library is located near the north east end of the parish church of St. Botolph (the Stump).

December 2005

Stamford

In 1801 Stamford Corporation bought the White Lion Inn in High Street. This was knocked down and a new butchers' shambles by William Legg built on the site. The new building was opened in 1808 consisting of an open portico supported by Tuscan columns which, it is said, were influenced by Inigo Jones' St. Paul Covent Garden. Under the front part was the butter market and behind, a fish market and 53 stalls for butchers. In 1894 the Technical Instruction School was built in the northern end of the building and the sides of the portico were filled in.

In 1903 Stamford adopted the Public Libraries' Act and in January 1906 the building was opened as a library. The cost of the conversion, which included a librarian's cottage behind, was £2,500-00 and secured from Andrew Carnegie. The library, which was opened by the Earl Brownlow, Lord Lieutenant, remains the town's public library. A museum was also opened in the building in 1961. The foundation stone outside of the building fails to recognise Carnegie.

November 2006

Newbury

Newbury adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1904. The library building was erected during 1905/6 and opened in May 1906 in Cheap Street on or near the site of a 17th or 18th Century workhouse called 'The Gaol'. A large beam from the old building is apparently incorporated in the library's gable. A sum of £500-00 was raised by local people to fund the free library, but the bulk of the funds (£2,000-00) were donated by Andrew Carnegie. The short road alongside the building was created at the time and named Carnegie Road. The building was extended in 1968 and the main entrance moved to Carnegie Road.

The go-ahead for the building was given by Newbury Borough Council in 1904 and the designs provided for an entrance lobby with several newspaper stands, so that people in a hurry could get a glance of the news without entering the building. The foundation stone was laid in June 1905 by Eleanor B. Palmer of Marlston House, Berkshire and the first librarian was J.W.Rosling.

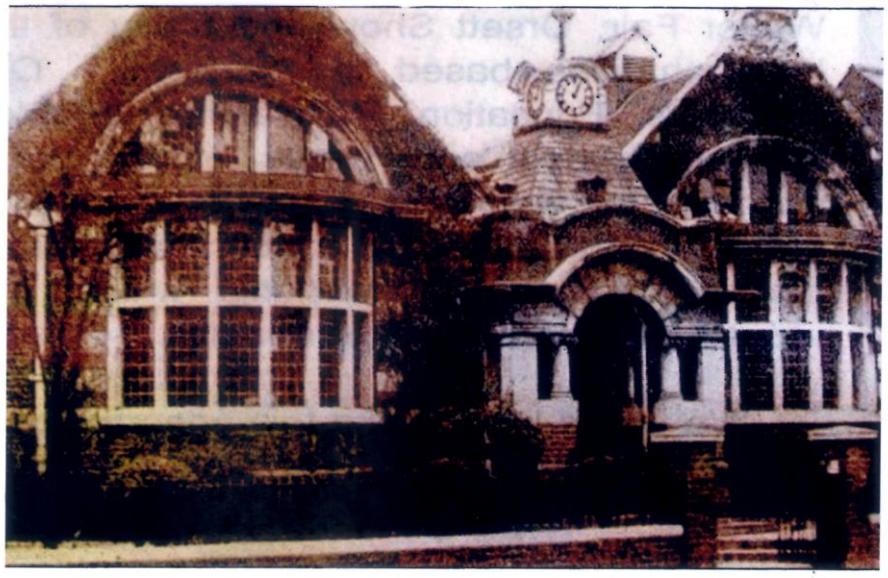
The foundation stone acknowledges that the building was 'erected through the liberality of Andrew Carnegie' and also names various local dignitaries. The building, which continued to be used as a public library until the new one was opened in July 2000, is now used as a restaurant.

June 2007

Grays

Grays adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1893 and opened a small free library facility in 1894. However, this soon proved inadequate in size for Grays growing population, especially after November 1895 when 500 volumes were offered by John Passmore Edwards (who had also given the Cottage Hospital at Tilbury). So Andrew Carnegie was approached in 1902 and he agreed to donate £3,000-00 provided a suitable site could be found. A site in Orsett Road was acquired at a cost of £600-00 and the new library was opened in November 1903. In turn, the rapidly growing population rendered this Carnegie library building (shown below) inadequate, so it was pulled down to make way for the present larger building which was opened in the late 1960s or early 1970s.
In the 1930s the Carnegie UK Trust also gave £50-00 a year for three years for museum cases on the understanding that the town matched this figure.

August 2007



Northampton

The present central library building in Abington Street is that which was funded by Andrew Carnegie. It was opened in June 1910 and is Grade II listed.
The front elevation of the building has a statue of Andrew Carnegie as well as of Thomas Fuller, George Washington and John Dryden.

December 2007

Lowestoft

Lowestoft adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1891, but the Carnegie building shown below was its first library facility. Unfortunately, this building, which was opened in May 1905 in Clapham Road, received a direct hit in an air raid in March 1941. Three quarters of the books were salvaged and subsequently the library was moved to St. Andrew's Hall and then to Eastholme in the High Street before moving to premises in Suffolk Road in 1951.

The current library, which was built on the site of the old Carnegie building, was opened in February 1975 and underwent a major refurbishment in 2003.

October 2008

Scunthorpe

Scunthorpe adopted the Public Libraries' Act in August 1902 and a grant from Andrew Carnegie was obtained. A public library was erected to the plans of the town surveyor, A. M. Cobban, on a site in the old Station Road (now known as High Street East) which was purchased by means of a gift from the Cliff Brothers of the Frodingham Iron and Steel Company. The foundation stone was laid in August 1903 and the library opened in February 1904 by Joseph Cliff. The first librarian was E. Davison.

Harold Dudley, the first curator of the Scunthorpe museum, set up a museum room in the Carnegie building in 1909.

The present Scunthorpe Central Library was completed in 1974 but contains no plaque from the Carnegie building (shown below), which seems to have been allowed to become dilapidated and was finally demolished c.1985.

June 2009

Gainsborough

A meeting was first held to discuss the provision of a free library in Gainsborough in 1891. A vote was held and carried by 1,057 in favour to 211 against. However, it was not until 1902 that Councillor Joseph Barlow, Chairman of the Urban District Council, wishing to commemorate the accession of Edward VII, wrote to Andrew Carnegie asking for financial help. Carnegie offered £4,000-00 provided the town adopted the Public Libraries' Act and found a suitable site. Sir Hickman Bacon offered a site on condition that the design of the building harmonised with the old Hall and James Marshall approached local employers in order to raise the money to purchase it. The Council adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1903 and the new library, which stands opposite Gainsborough Old Hall in Cobden Street on its junction with Bright Street, was opened in October 1905.
The building is still used as a library. There is no tablet either inside or out which recognises Carnegie's contribution.

July 2009

Lincoln

Lincoln first established a public library under the Public Libraries' Act, which it adopted in 1892, in the old Assembly Rooms over the Butter Market in Silver Street. In 1895 it had 7,000 books and news and reading rooms were opened in that year. In 1913 the library was transferred to a new building in Free School Lane which was built with a grant of £10,000-00 from Andrew Carnegie. The library was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield (who also designed the Usher Gallery) and was opened by Dr. T. E. Page (a distinguished classics scholar from Lincoln). By 1922 the library, which remains the City's public library, had 16,000 books and by 1937, 48,000 books. A large stone plaque in a meeting room adjacent to the Children's Library recognises the contribution of Carnegie. It reads: 'This building owes its erection in 1913 to the munificence of Andrew Carnegie'.

July 2009

Hull

Hull adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1892 and opened its first library facility in 1893. The branch library in Analby Road was opened in April 1905 by Sir Joseph Reckitt, chairman of the Libraries Committee. In 1903 Andrew Carnegie had donated £3,000-00 towards what was Hull's fifth branch library and the site was supplied free of charge by the City Corporation. Construction had begun in the winter of 1904 to the designs of the City architect, Joseph Hirst. The library began with a stock of 9,000 books.

The building was closed in 2003 and the library transferred to the Learning Centre in the new sports stadium nearby. The Carnegie building experienced only sporadic use thereafter until it was rescued by the Carnegie Heritage Action Team. The resulting Carnegie Heritage Centre was opened to the public in January 2008 and now includes, amongst other things, the headquarters of the East Yorkshire Family History Society.

September 2009

Grantham

Grantham's Carnegie library was built in St. Peter's Hill and, though the public library is now located behind the shopping centre opposite, the building remains in use as a museum.

A local referendum was held in 1893, but the voting went against providing a town library. However, a second referendum in 1913 overturned this decision and the Public Libraries' Act was adopted in that year. The building was funded by the Carnegie UK Trust and opened in May 1926 by Sir Charles C. E. Welby. The project was made successful by the librarian, W. G. Summers, and by Henry Preston, the most active member of the Library and Museum Committees who had led the campaign from the 1890s.

There is a bronze plaque outside the building, which used to be in the entranceway, that acknowledges the contribution of Carnegie. It states: 'This building was provided by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust and the Corporation of Grantham. Opened on the 6th day of May 1926 by Sir Charles C E Welby, Bart. C B .....'

April 2010

Harrogate

Harrogate's first public library was opened in 1887 at Fern Villa in Princes Street, the town having adopted the Public Libraries' Act the previous year. In 1903, when plans were drawn up to replace a temporary building on the present site in Victoria Avenue with a new town hall, Andrew Carnegie offered £7,500-00 towards the cost of the library wing. Work on this began on 17 October 1904 to the design of H. T. Hope. However, the library wing of what was to be a gigantic neo-baroque 'Municipal Palace' complete with clock tower was the only part ever built. The library was opened on 24 January 1906 by the Bishop of Bath and Wells and the remainder of the site laid out as gardens. The art gallery was added to the upper floor in 1930.
The building, which is still used as a public library, clearly credits Andrew Carnegie with a plaque on the outside of the building as well as with another inside which also records the opening.

January 2012

Ashby (Lincolnshire)

Ashby, which now forms part of Scunthorpe, adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1905 and its Carnegie free library in Ashby High Street was opened in April 1906 by Mrs. F. Chatterton. Andrew Carnegie had donated £1,500-00 and the architect was W. H. Buttrick. The site had been purchased by public subscription and the first librarian was Clement Kendal who remained in the post until his death in 1931.
The Carnegie building, which retains its beautiful original wooden staircase, is no longer used as a library. It stood empty and rather forlorn for some years but is now used as a fitness centre. The new library further up the High Street contains a plaque removed from the old building which acknowledges the contribution of Carnegie. It states: 'Ashby Free Library – MDCCCCVI – The building was erected by aid of a gift of £1,500 from Andrew Carnegie Esq. Skibo Castle, Sutherlandshire'.

August 2012

Gravesend

Gravesend adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1892 after a poll of citizens resulted in a majority of 926 in favour. The library service began in September 1893 and a free library was established in two rooms in the Technical School. When Alex J. Philip was offered the post of librarian, he only agreed to be appointed providing Carnegie was approached so that a much larger building could be built. Carnegie offered £6,000-00 on the understanding that the town should provide a suitable site. A group of the town's wealthiest citizens contributed a thousand guineas (£1,050-00) to buy the vacant plot in Windmill Street.

The building was designed by Edmund J. Bennett (architect). The town put the contract out to tender but the lowest tender was from a non-Gravesend firm. The contract was, though, awarded to A.E.Tong, local businessmen having raised the £170-00 so that the lowest local tender could be accepted.

The new library was opened on 28 September 1905 by the mayor, George Matthew Arnold. Andrew Carnegie was invited to open the library, but was unable to attend. He was presented with the Freedom of the Borough in 1906 as a gesture of thanks. Carnegie is recognised on the exterior of the building, which is still used as a library, and there is a large photograph of him inside. There are also two plaques inside, one of which recognises Carnegie and the local dignitaries involved and the other the businessmen who provided the site. The library has since been extended into the property next door.

September 2012

Eastbourne

The present public library building, which was opened in 1965, is in Grove Road on the exact site of the Carnegie building (shown below) which was irreparably damaged by German bombing in 1943.

The Public Libraries' Act was adopted in 1896 and a temporary library set up in the old Vestry Room, Grove Road. In March 1896 the Technical Instruction Committee appointed a librarian, J.H.Hardcastle, who was only 23 years old, on a salary of £65-00 per year. In the same year a Library Committee was formed.

The new committee was anxious to provide a purpose-built library building and in 1899 the Duke of Devonshire, to commemorate his year as Mayor, provided the site, which was valued at £5,500-00, for a building to be used for library and educational purposes. The Council agreed to erect a building to house a Technical Institute and Public Library.

Andrew Carnegie gave £10,000-00 towards the cost of the library part of the building on condition that the library rate was increased from 1/2d to 3/4d in the pound. The building was designed by P.A.Robson of Westminster. The Central Library and Technical Institute was opened on 08 August 1904 by the Duchess of Devonshire. It was constructed in brick and Portland stone to mirror the Town Hall. Carnegie was unable to attend the opening but visited Eastbourne on 15 May 1905 to receive the Freedom of the Borough.

October 2012

King's Lynn

The Carnegie building, which stands in London Road and is still used as a public library, was opened on 18 May 1905 by Andrew Carnegie himself. Either side of the entrance there are foundation stones laid in 1904: one makes reference to Andrew Carnegie, the architect, Herbert J. Green, and the contractor, W. F. Smith, and the other to the mayor, W. R. Smith, who laid the stone, Richard Green, the chairman of the Libraries Committee, T. E. Maw, the librarian, and J. W. Woolstencraft, the town clerk.

King's Lynn adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1892 and had a free public library, the Stanley Public Library, from 1899. The Corporation received a report that a new larger building would cost about £3,800-00. An approach was made to Carnegie who, in a letter signed by James Bertram, offered the £5,000-00 that had been requested. Various tenders ranging from £3,887-00 to £4,360-00 were received, but the eventual total cost, including the iron fencing, came to £5,368-00. Carnegie wrote to say that he would make up the £368-00 shortfall.

There seem to have been between three and five thousand people at the opening. Carnegie apparently wanted one or more members of the Royal Family to come from Sandringham nearby, but none came. Carnegie appears to have opened the new library in Lowestoft on the same day.

King's Lynn library has three substantial folders on the history of its libraries.

October 2012

Irchester

Irchester Parish Council approached Andrew Carnegie for a grant to build a free library and was promised £1,000-00. Baroness Wantage donated a site. When plans were sent to Carnegie in 1908, his secretary apparently replied that 'Mr. Carnegie has promised to put up a library building not a dwelling house'. Whether or not, in light of this, the plans were significantly modified can only be determined by examining the correspondence in the Carnegie UK Trust papers at the Scottish Archives in Edinburgh.

The library was officially opened on 20 November 1909 by the Hon. Sir Edward Chandos Leigh K.C.B., K.C., a former Counsel to the Speaker of the House of Commons who lived at nearby Knuston Hall from 1903 to 1915.

February 2013

Rushden

Councillor John Claridge wrote to Carnegie and secured an offer of £2,000-00 to provide a Free Public Library building on condition that the Public Libraries' Act was adopted, that a maximum rate of 1d in the £ was levied and that a suitable site was provided. The cost of the latter was not to be a burden on the rates.
Rushden UDC accepted the offer on 15 July 1902 and the Public Libraries' Act was adopted on 27 August 1902. A committee, chaired by Councillor George Denton, was appointed to raise the funds for a site. Eight sites were considered before the one in Newton Road was adopted. The Council's Surveyor was W.B.Madin. The Library building, which is still in use and which now has a modern entranceway attached to its left hand elevation, was opened on 25 November 1905 by the Marquis of Northampton. Carnegie was unable to attend as he was in America. The builder was W.Packwood and the Chairman of the Library Committee, John Claridge.
In December 1905 the Committee of Public Safety brought a petition signed by 30 individuals to the Council asking that the *Betting News* be removed from the list of papers bought. The Council appointed a new committee to consider it!
A caretaker, J.Hazeldine, was appointed in November 1906, but there was no librarian until December 1907 when a young lady, Miss Mantle, was appointed at 12s a week.
Responsibility for the library passed to Northamptonshire CC in 1974.

February 2013

Peterborough

Peterborough adopted the Public Libraries' Act in March 1891 after a poll resulted in 2,258 in favour and 1,131 against. It opened a lending and reference library to the public in April 1893 in a building in Park Road close to the present central library.

In 1902, the mayor of Peterborough (George Keeble) wrote privately to Andrew Carnegie asking for a donation towards the establishment of branch libraries. Carnegie refused to do this, but Keeble persisted and wrote suggesting a new central library. Carnegie agreed to pay £6,000-00 on condition that the Council provided the site and paid off any debt-charges on the Park Road library.

The mayor announced Carnegie's offer at a council meeting in August 1903 and the gift was unanimously accepted. A site in Broadway was decided on despite its awkward triangular shape. It had formerly been part of the cattle market and the Council had already begun to build a Technical School on the southern half of the site.

In April 1904, it was decided to hold an architectural competition to find a design for the new building and, by July, 285 alternative plans had been submitted! The winning design was by Hall and Phillips of London. The contract to build was awarded in October 1904 to John Cracknell at £4,791-00 (agreed variations eventually brought the cost to £5,174-00)

The building was informally opened on 04 December 1905 and Carnegie performed the official opening on 29 May 1906 after first visiting the Guildhall to receive the Freedom of the City.

William James Wilcock was appointed librarian at a salary of £100-00 on 16 August 1898 after Peterborough's first librarian resigned. Wilcock eventually died in office in March 1924.

The present central library, which is also in Broadway just across Fitzwilliam Street, replaced the Carnegie building and was opened in December 1990 by the Duke of Gloucester. The Carnegie building is now used as a restaurant and night club.

March 2013

Mansfield

The first free public library in Mansfield was opened in 1891 after the Public Libraries' Act had been adopted the previous year. A meeting of ratepayers chaired by George Hudson Hibbert had been held on 31 March 1890 and voted in favour by a show of hands.

The penny rate was not enough to provide a purpose built library so one was opened in the Corn Exchange at the rear of the Town Hall. William Gouk was appointed first librarian.

Carnegie was approached and agreed to pay £3,500-00 for a new library building providing a site was donated. The Duke of Portland provided land in Leeming Street.

The foundation stone was laid in July 1904 by the wife of the local MP, Arthur Markham, and the library (shown above) was opened on 24 May 1905 by the Mayor, George Hudson Hibbert.

When William Gouk retired in 1904 he was succeeded by his daughter, Edith.

In 1928 it was agreed that some reorganisation was needed and £1,500-00 over three years was secured from the Carnegie UK Trust for, amongst other things, the purchase of new books.

In 1932 a further storey was added to the front of the building in order to accommodate a reference library. A children's library was built adjacent to the building in 1961.

Responsibility for the library passed to Nottinghamshire County Council in 1974 and on 28 July 1977 the new library was opened in the Four Seasons Shopping Centre on Westgate by HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Since closing as a library, the Leeming Street building remained empty until November 1978 and has since had various uses including serving as a venue for a Theatre Group and the Mansfield Community Arts Centre. It is now used primarily as a café, but retains some arts related activities.
On the front elevation there is a stone tablet acknowledging Carnegie's gift and a further plaque inside which provides details of the laying of the foundation stone.

April 2013

Sandown

In 1903 a poll was taken in Sandown with a majority of 200 in favour of establishing a library service under the Public Libraries' Act. Andrew Carnegie agreed to defray the entire cost of the building, (c.£2,000-00), providing a suitable site was donated and the Public Libraries' Act adopted. A site was provided at the easterly end of the High Street by a local resident, Alexander Keller, who owned various properties in the town including the Savoy Hotel nearby. The foundation stones were laid on 11 January 1905 and the library opened by Lord Alverstone, who was then Lord Chief Justice of England, on 29 July of that year.

The opening ceremony was presided over by Mr.T.A.Wright, the Chairman of the District Council. He was supported by Lord Alverstone, Mr.J.Dore, the Chairman of the Library Committee, and innumerable other officials. In addition to public reading and writing rooms, the building, which is still used as a public library, included a reference library and, at one stage, a substantial collection of fossils.

Carnegie sent a telegram: 'I congratulate Sandown on its Free Library and on the distinguished peer it has obtained for the opening ceremony, one of whom I am privileged to call my friend. I offer every good wish for the prosperity of Sandown and the happiness of all her people – Andrew Carnegie'

There is a stone plaque on the outside of the building which is badly weathered which acknowledges Carnegie. There is also a stone plaque, much better preserved, which recognises Keller. The words 'Free Library' appear over the door and there is also a clock set in the stone work with the words 'Time and Tide waits for no Man' underneath.

Alexander Keller was born in Budapest in c.1834 and arrived in London via Hamburg in 1858/9. He seems at first to have worked as a bookkeeper and then as a merchant. He acquired much valuable land and property in Sandown.

September 2013

Melton Mowbray

Melton Mowbray adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1903. The Carnegie building, which now houses the town's museum, is located in Thorpe End. Carnegie donated the £2,000-00 for the library building and the site was provided by the Melton Mowbray Town Estate after it had acquired it for £800-00. The building was designed by E. Drake, the Borough Surveyor, and built by C. Barnes of Thorpe End. The foundation stone was laid by William Willcox, who had been the first to approach Carnegie for help, on 21 July 1904. The Carnegie library, which provided the first free library for the townsfolk and has the words 'Carnegie Free Library' above the entrance door, was opened in 1905. The building was closed as a library in 1974 and opened as the Carnegie Museum in 1977. In 1977 the present library was opened in Wilton Road.

January 2014

Sevenoaks

The Carnegie library building in The Drive on its corner with High Street is still referred to as The Old Library and is now used as offices for a company running a chain of hotels.

In July 1903, Carnegie offered £3,000-00 subject to his usual conditions. The land was donated to Sevenoaks Urban District Council by Henry Swaffield, who had already given the land for the adjoining Methodist church, as well as almshouses and various other public buildings and facilities in the town. Swaffield was a Cornishman who ended up living in Sevenoaks and became a great benefactor to the town. The Public Libraries' Act was adopted in 1904.

The architect was E. Evans Cronk of Pall Mall and Sevenoaks, whose plans were modified by Carnegie. The building, which was built of red brick and Bath stone, was opened by Lord Avebury on 14 November 1905. Many books were donated by Mr. Swaffield. The first librarian was E. Gilham. The building remained as the town's library until the present larger one in Buckhurst Lane was opened in May 1986.

The County Council, which by now owned it, sold the site to a developer who then sold it on. Each of the developers wanted to demolish the building and erect offices and/or houses of greater density. However, the trustees of the adjacent Methodist church and many of the residents of The Drive strongly objected, drawing attention to restrictive covenants. Amongst the covenants that Swaffield made was that, if in due course the library building was no longer needed, it should be used as a single dwelling only. Eventually a compromise was reached to allow changes but to enable the exterior of the building to remain unaltered.

Some time after Henry Swaffield's death it was decided to hold a meeting to discuss an appropriate memorial. Only four people turned up!

April 2014

Littlehampton

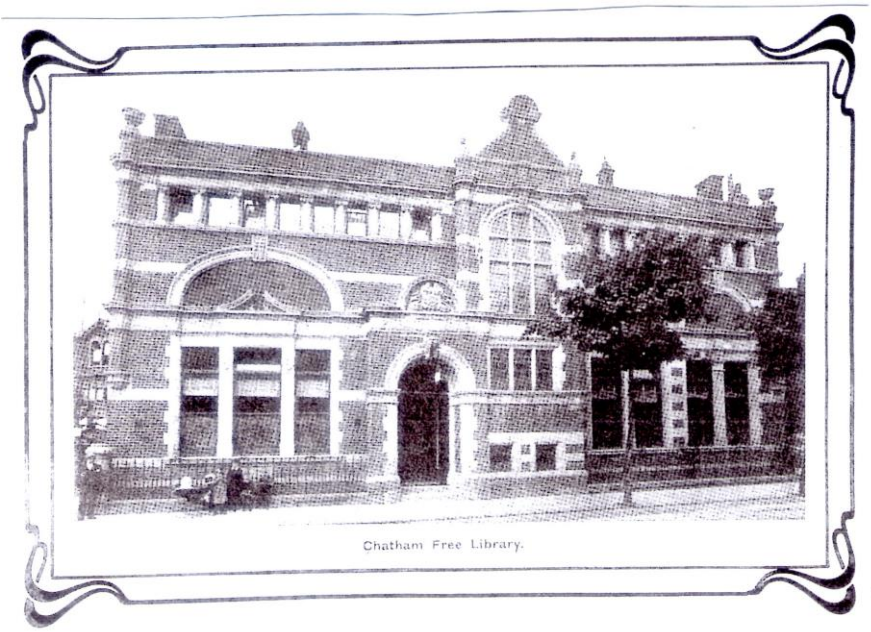
Littlehampton adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1905 and the Carnegie Library in Maltravers Road was opened in 1906 on land donated by the Duke of Norfolk. The building was designed by the Council's surveyor, H. Howard. The foundation stone was laid by Lord Edmund Talbot MP on 04 March 1905. There is no indication of Carnegie's generosity with a plaque or stone either inside or outside of the building, which is still used as the town's library. It simply has the words 'Free Library' above the entrance.
An extension was added to the building and opened in 2002, the year of the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

May 2014

Chatham

Chatham adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1893. Chatham is listed as having received a grant from Andrew Carnegie in the catalogue of Carnegie papers in the Scottish Archives and in the unpublished thesis by Mrs Anne Smith submitted for her Fellowship of the Library Association. The library building shown below, which was opened in 1903, is, undoubtedly the one funded by Carnegie. This Chatham Free Library was an impressive building with ornate glass windows. It remained in use as the town's public library until the 1960s, when the present library was opened in Riverside Gardens. The Carnegie building was demolished during the 1980s in order to make way for the construction of a new footbridge that was to cross over a widened New Road.

November 2014



Chatham Free Library.

Goole

Andrew Carnegie was approached in October 1902 and agreed to pay £3,000-00 subject to his usual conditions, including the adoption of the Public Libraries' Act and the levying of the 1d in the £ rate. The Public Libraries' Act was adopted in 1903 and plans were prepared by Mr H B Thorp and submitted to Carnegie, who approved them. The site in Carlisle Street was donated by Mr Ralph Creyke. One stone was laid by Mr Creyke and the other by Councillor Blyth, the Chairman of Goole Urban District Council. The library was built of brick with red Ruabon terracotta facings, with lofty windows and projecting buttresses, and a balustrade extending along the whole length of the front. The building had a reading room, a lending library, librarian's offices and other work rooms and offices. The opening ceremony was performed by Mr Miles Gaskell, Chairman of West Riding County Council, in April 1905.

The building, (which is shown below), was damaged during the Second World War when two Wellington bombers collided nearby. By the 1960s the library was in need of considerable repair, including to the roof. It was decided to close the facility and open a new purpose built new building, also in Carlisle Street. This was opened in 1968 and remains as the town's library.

January 2015

Dartford

Dartford adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1912 and its library was opened on 01 January 1916 by A.W.Smale, the Chairman of the Council, and W.A.Ward, the Chairman of the Library Committee. There is a commemorative stone on the outside of the building which records the opening and another which acknowledges Andrew Carnegie's contribution.

The Carnegie UK Trust covered the £7,400-00 cost of the building, which was by T.E.Tiffin, the Town Surveyor. Pevsner describes it as being 'large and square but single storeyed. Of red brick and bath stone in a Baroque style.'

The library opened with a stock of 5,300 volumes and became the home of the museum collection in 1921 after this had been moved from the Technical Institute. The building is still in use as the town's library.

May 2017

Folkestone

Folkestone adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1878. The present library building in Grace Hill was opened in 1887. In 1900 the Library Committee raised a loan and bought three cottages at the rear of the building in order to enable future expansion. Andrew Carnegie was approached in 1908 and agreed to make a grant of £5,000-00 on condition that the site was provided without touching the product of the penny rate, i.e. that the outstanding debt of about £800-00 be cleared so that the full resources could go to maintaining the library. Public subscriptions were invited and by August 1909 amounted to £286-00 including £100-00 from the MP Sir Edward Sassoon. An outdoor fete raised another £52-00 and Sir Edward then made up the remaining balance. The work on the extension was, therefore, begun.

The library and museum extension was opened by Sir Edward Sassoon on 28 October 1910. A plaque inside the extension records this and, in addition to Sir Edward, lists the Chairman of the Library Committee, Alderman T.J. Vaughan J.P., the librarian, Stuart G. Hills, and the names of the contractors, the architect, the borough engineer and the town clerk. Carnegie was invited to open the extension but was unable to accept.

A further extension was made in 1933 when the Carnegie UK Trust gave a grant of £550-00 to be spent on books. This further extension was opened by Philip Sassoon, the son of Sir Edward.

June 2019

Gorleston-on-Sea (Norfolk)

Gorleston was granted £2,000-00 by Andrew Carnegie in 1905 for a library on the corner of Baker Street and Lowestoft Road. The building, shown below, was designed by the Borough Architect, J.W.Cockrill, and was opened in 1907. The building was demolished in 1975 and the present library built on the same site.

August 2019

Ipswich

Ipswich adopted the Public Libraries' Act in 1853 and in that year opened a library and museum. This library was subordinate to the museum and did not have lending facilities until c.1887.

The present Ipswich County Library in Northgate Street was built with a substantial grant from the Carnegie UK Trust and was opened in 1924. There is no plaque either inside or outside of the building which recognises Carnegie's contribution apart from a modern plastic information board which briefly refers to Carnegie on the second floor and is located outside 'The Carnegie Room'.

March 2022